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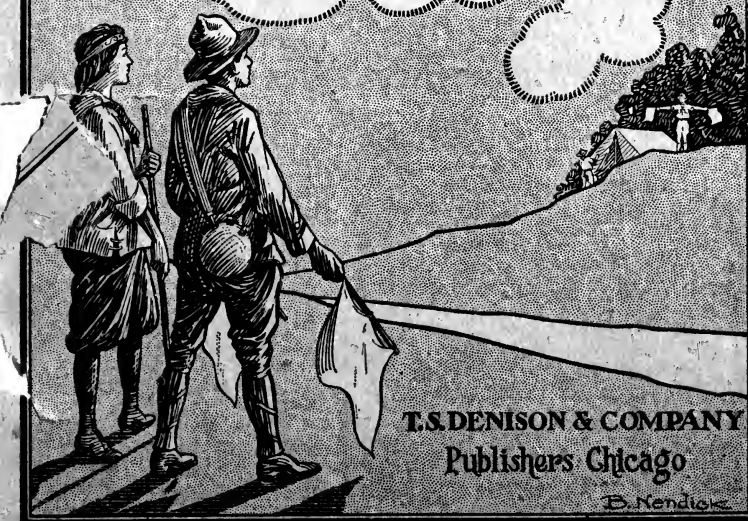
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# Denison's SCOUT & CAMP-FIRE Series

How Beth  
Won the Camp  
Fire Honor

Price 25 Cents



T.S. DENISON & COMPANY  
Publishers Chicago

B. Nendick

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Winning Widow, 2 acts, 1¼ hrs. (25c) .....		2 4

**T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers, 154 W. Randolph St., Chicago**

# HOW BETH WON THE CAMP FIRE HONOR

A COMEDY-DRAMA IN TWO ACTS

BY

LINDSEY BARBEE

11

AUTHOR OF

*"After the Game," "At the End of the Rainbow," "The Call of the Colors," "The Call of Wohelo," "The Dream That Came True," "The Fifteenth of January," "Her First Scoop," "The Kingdom of Heart's Content," "The Real Thing After All," "Ruth in a Rush," "Sing a Song of Seniors," "The Spell of the Image," "The Thread of Destiny," "Tomorrow at Ten," "A Trial of Hearts," "A Watch, a Wallet and a Jack of Spades," "The Whole Truth," "In the College Days," "Let's Pretend — A Book of Children's Plays," etc.*



CHICAGO

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# HOW BETH WON THE CAMP FIRE HONOR

## CHARACTERS.

(Named in order of appearance.)

ETHEL (*Wahsulah—Little Hailstorm*)...*A Wood Gatherer*  
ELSIE (*Wacheewee—Dancing Girl*)...*Also a Wood Gatherer*  
MISS JANE.....*Who Tells of the Hidden Treasure*  
BETH (*Lexse—Clover*)...*Who Owns Up to Being a Coward*  
CLARE (*Kokokoho—Owl*).....*A Torch Bearer*  
IRENE (*Minnetoska—Happy Laughter*)....*A Fire Maker*  
MISS CARTER (*Huntawee—Cedar Maid*).....  
.....*Guardian of the Camp Fire*  
MANDY.....*Who Believes in Signs*  
CHARLOTTE (*Alibamu—Clear-the-Thicket*).....  
.....*True to Her Name*  
OLIVE (*Migwan—Quill*).....*Of Literary Aspirations*  
ELMA.....*A Bit of a Snob*  
HAZEL.....*A Bit of a Fashion Plate*  
NITA.....*A Bit of a Flirt*  
THE GYPSY.....*Who Precipitates the Excitement*

SCENE: *A Summer Camp of the Camp Fire Girls.*

TIME—*The Present.*

TIME OF PLAYING—*About One and Three-quarter Hours.*

ACT I—*The Threat of the Gypsy. Afternoon.*

ACT II—*The Finding of the Treasure. Evening.*

SETTING—*The Yard of the old Randolph Estate in Virginia.*

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## SYNOPSIS FOR PROGRAM.

ACT I—The story of the secret passage and the hidden treasure. Beth, while confessing that she is a coward, accepts a wager that she will meet the first emergency with true Camp Fire spirit. The advent of the gypsy and the subsequent disappearance of Beth.

ACT II—Beth does not return and Mandy is forced to tell her story. Amid a bewildering confusion of gypsies, caves and kidnappings, a mysterious pounding raises the trap door and reveals Beth. The conquest of Fear—the discovery of the treasure—and the winning of Uta!

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## STORY OF THE PLAY.

A Camp Fire circle, spending the summer on Miss Jane Randolph's Virginia estate, thrills to the story of a secret passage that has never been discovered and that contains treasure hidden during Civil War times, and longs to help Miss Jane by finding her long-lost money and jewels. Beth, confessing that she is a coward, nevertheless enters into a compact with some near-by friends that she will meet any emergency in true Camp Fire style. These friends, longing for a joke and hearing of Beth's aversion to gypsies, dress as gypsies, forcibly kidnap her and bear her to an old cave not far away where they shut her in. Beth, left to her own devices, finds that, after all, courage has come to her, and in her investigation of the cave stumbles and wrenches loose a part of the rock which reveals an opening. On further exploration she finds that the opening leads to a passage, and following the passage she comes upon the hidden treasure and makes her triumphal appearance through an old trap door in the summer house, just as the assembled Camp Fire girls are frantically trying to trace her and as the three perpetrators of the joke are breaking the news that their victim has escaped from the cave. Beth tells her story, gives Miss Jane a tangible proof that the treasure is really in the passage, and, as a reward for overcoming fear and making a supreme effort for another, is given the Camp Fire honor of Uta.

## CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES.

The girls are all modern types—gay, attractive and worth while—with CLARE and IRENE a trifle older and more dignified, CHARLOTTE a little more boyish and OLIVE serious and preoccupied. MISS CARTER is of decided poise and presence; MISS JANE is sweet and old-fashioned, and MANDY, a wide-eyed, easily impressed little darkey of about twelve years of age. ELMA, HAZEL and NITA are superficial, affected and artificial, with a touch of seriousness in the latter part of Act II.

ETHEL, ELSIE and BETH wear bloomers and middies in Act I; CLARE, IRENE, MISS CARTER and MISS JANE are in pretty summer gowns; CHARLOTTE is in khaki outing suit and OLIVE in gingham dress and sunbonnet; MANDY wears a bright-hued calico dress and white apron; while EMMA, HAZEL and NITA are in very fancy summer clothes, changing to gypsy costumes in the latter part of Act I. In Act II, MISS JANE, BETH, MANDY, ELMA, HAZEL and NITA wear the same as in Act I. All the others are in Camp Fire ceremonial attire.

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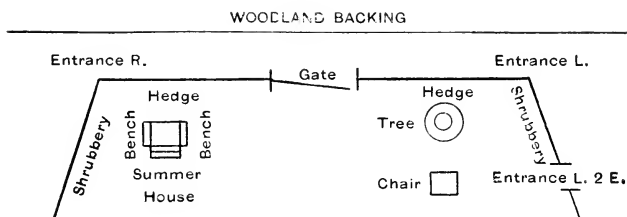
## PROPERTIES.

ACT I—Summer house with benches; tree with seat; rustic chair and gate. Ouija board for ETHEL and ELSIE; wrist watches for ETHEL and BETH; basket for BETH; pan of apples and knife for MISS JANE; fancy work for CLARE and IRENE; money for ELSIE; mail for CHARLOTTE; copy of a Camp Fire magazine for OLIVE; ring for ELMA; flash light for MANDY.

ACT II—Flash light and small box for BETH; ring for ELMA.

The Wood Gatherers should wear the Wood Gatherer ring and have the emblem (logs ready to kindle) on the right arm. The Fire Maker should wear the Fire Maker bracelet and the emblem (orange and red) on the right arm. The Torch Bearer should have the pin and the emblem (touch of white).

## SCENE PLOT.



## STAGE DIRECTIONS.

*R.* means right of the stage; *C.*, center; *L.*, left; *U. E.*, upper entrance; *R. 3 E.*, right entrance up stage; up stage, away from footlights; down stage, near footlights. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

## HOW BETH WON THE CAMP FIRE HONOR

### ACT I.

SCENE: *The yard of MISS JANE RANDOLPH'S Virginia home—just the sort of yard that goes with a large rambling, white-pillared southern mansion. Close to its woodland drop is a low, close-cut hedge with a wooden gate at its center. At the upper right of stage is an old-fashioned summer-house covered with vines, with a wooden bench on either side of its wee interior. Down L. is a rustic chair and at the left of the gate an old tree with a seat around its trunk stands guard. There are entrances at L., at L. 2 E. and at R.*

*As the curtain rises one first glances at MISS JANE, as she sits in the rustic chair, paring apples. Her hair is just touched with gray and in her fresh gingham dress and ruffled apron she is as sweet and old-fashioned as one of her own wild roses. ETHEL and ELSIE, deeply engrossed in a Ouija board, are seated on the grass, right of center, while BETH, intently weaving an Indian basket, occupies the center of the stage. Off in the summer house, CLARE and IRENE, in dainty summer gowns which contrast sharply with the middy blouses and bloomers of the three younger girls, are busily sewing and chatting together.*

ETHEL. Now listen, Ouija. We're asking about the underground passage. Do you understand? (*As the table moves.*) It says yes, Elsie.

ELSIE. But where is the underground passage, Ouija? (*As the table moves.*) It's pointing to I. (*Silence for a moment, then she spells slowly.*), C-E. Do you mean ice, Ouija? (*As the table moves.*) Yes? Well, ice what?

ETHEL (*spelling slowly as the table moves*). H-O-U—do you suppose it's house? Is it house, Ouija? (*As the table moves quickly.*) Yes.

ELSIE. Was there an ice-house on this place, Miss Jane?



MISS JANE. There used to be, my dear, but not for many years.

ETHEL (*excitedly*). Then, perhaps, we're on the right track. Now, Ouija, tell us where the ice-house used to be? (*As ELSIE hesitates.*) What's the matter, Elsie?

ELSIE. I don't believe it meant ice-house, Ethel. You see, I was thinking of a story in which there was an underground passage from the ice-house—a passage for fugitive slaves.

ETHEL. Then you pushed it.

ELSIE. I didn't push it.

ETHEL. It's the same thing. When you think *hard* about something, it's bound to make the table move the way you're thinking.

ELSIE. Then why didn't you do some hard thinking of your own?

ETHEL. Because I wanted to play fair.

ELSIE. Well, so did I.

ETHEL. Then you should have kept your mind blank.

ELSIE. I can't keep my mind blank and I don't want to keep it blank.

ETHEL. In that case you shouldn't try to work Ouija.

ELSIE (*pushing the board away*). I *won't*. I'm sick of Ouija, anyway. It hasn't told us a single thing we wanted to know.

BETH. And it *won't* tell you either, if you want to know what *I* think.

ETHEL (*crossly*). Who wants to know what you think, Beth?

BETH. And what's more, I don't believe that Miss Carter would approve. I'm sure she wouldn't.

CLARE. What is the trouble?

ETHEL. No trouble at all, Clare. Just Ouija.

IRENE. Well, I should call that trouble enough. I don't believe that Miss Carter would approve of your playing with that thing, girls.

ETHEL (*sarcastically*). Now, Irene, if somebody else will tell me that Miss Carter doesn't approve, the third time will be the charm.

CLARE. What a stormy creature you are, Ethel! *Now*, I understand why you chose an Indian name that means "little hailstorm."

ETHEL. Oh, *do* you? Well, perhaps somebody has thought it a little funny for you to sound like a soda fountain. Kokokoho—what a name!

IRENE. Sounds good to me. Coca-cola isn't to be scorned on a hot July day.

ETHEL (*still blazing*). And as to Miss Carter's objecting—I told her about it and she laughed—

ELSIE. And told us it was all right if we had any fun out of it. So there.

IRENE. Then we all apologize—profusely and on the double-quick.

ELSIE. And anyway, it was chiefly because we wanted to help Miss Jane by finding the treasure. *Wasn't* it, Miss Jane?

MISS JANE. Of course it was. Though I'm afraid that even Ouija can't solve that mystery. Sometimes I wonder if, after all, there *is* a treasure.

ELSIE. Why, what do you mean, Miss Jane?

MISS JANE (*laughingly*). Perhaps I dreamed it all.

ELSIE. You couldn't have dreamed it.

MISS JANE. But I was a very small child when it happened.

ETHEL. Aren't you certain about the underground passage?

MISS JANE. My mother had been told of its existence, but only my father and my brother knew the exact location.

ETHEL. But there *was* a treasure!

MISS JANE. If you call family silver—and a few jewels—a treasure.

IRENE. I am dying of curiosity, Miss Jane. What is this underground passage—and the treasure?

CLARE. Oh, I forgot that you missed the story, Irene. Please tell her, Miss Jane. It sounds like a bit of romance.

IRENE. Oh, please!

MISS JANE. It isn't much of a story, my dear.

IRENE. Anything with a secret passage *must* be a story.

MISS JANE. This passage had no special romantic significance. It was just a hiding place for what jewels and silver we possessed.

IRENE. During the war?

MISS JANE. During the war. We had to conceal many things from the Yankees of that time.

IRENE. But did the Yankees find the hiding place?

MISS JANE. Not to our knowledge. But, my father and my brother were killed—almost immediately—and they alone knew the secret.

IRENE. But—your mother—

MISS JANE. She has never been able to discover just where the passage is.

IRENE. You've hunted?

MISS JANE. Everywhere. Perhaps the enemy found it, after all. (*To ETHEL.*) What time is it, my dear?

ETHEL (*as she glances at her watch*). Four, Miss Jane.

MISS JANE. Dear me! Cook will be quite ready for these apples.

ELSIE (*rising*). Let me take them in for you.

MISS JANE. But I'm on duty myself.

BETH. I wish you'd stay.

MISS JANE. You fascinating Camp Fire girls make me play truant too often. (*Rises.*) I'll promise to come later if I may.

CLARE. *If you may!* We insist. And tonight we'll be in ceremonial attire—so you can't afford to miss us.

MISS JANE. I can never afford to miss you. Don't I prove it by eternally dogging your footsteps? (*Exit L. & E.*)

BETH. Isn't she a dear? (*Pauses.*) And to think that all those things are hidden—somewhere—and nobody knows the place.

ETHEL. Silver and jewels would bring a lot of money.

BETH. And I wonder if she needs the money very much.

CLARE. I'm sure she does. Miss Carter told me that the estate had dwindled until she depends entirely upon her summer boarders for an income.

IRENE. Weren't we fortunate to find such a place for our camp?

CLARE. *Camp!* A pretty luxurious camp, I call it. That beautiful old house for a home and such food as one dreams of! I never want to leave.

MISS CARTER *enters from L. during above speech. She is the type of the ideal guardian of a Camp Fire—just enough dignity and poise, balanced by an ever-present humor and understanding—to make her altogether charming.*

MISS CARTER (*laughing*). Then you must be satisfied with my choice of a camp. (*As they rise.*) Sit down, my Indian warriors. It's much too warm for any unnecessary effort. (*As she seats herself at the tree the girls assume their former positions.*)

IRENE. How did you happen to hear of this place, Miss Carter?

MISS CARTER. Through a friend who knows Miss Jane very well. I felt that it would be an ideal spot for a Camp Fire outing, would relieve us of our domestic routine and would at the same time—help her.

BETH. I wish we could really help her, Miss Carter. (*Pauses.*) If we could find what is hidden away, it would be a *real* help, wouldn't it?

MISS CARTER. It would, indeed. But we can't rely upon the tradition of that hidden treasure—for it may be just a story, after all.

BETH. It can't be. Miss Jane's mother told her.

MISS CARTER. But she may have misunderstood. Remember that those were trying days.

BETH. Just the same, I wish *I* might find it.

MISS CARTER. Then, why don't you?

BETH. I? *I?* Why, Miss Carter, you don't mean *that*?

MISS CARTER. Why not?

BETH. You know that I'm a coward. (*As MISS CARTER protests.*) Oh, yes, you *do*. I've told you how I'm afraid of the dark—and thunder—and lightning—and mice!

MISS CARTER. That's no way for a Wood Gatherer to talk.

BETH. Oh, I know that it isn't—but I can't help it. Why, Miss Carter, if I should happen to find that passage and knew that I could lay my hands on the treasure, I'd never have the courage to stir a foot. The dark—the cold—the rats—(*shudders*) Ugh!

MISS CARTER (*leaning forward and taking BETH's basket*). What is your symbol, dear?

BETH. A clover leaf—that's the meaning of my Indian name, you know. (*Sighs.*) It ought to be a white feather.

MISS CARTER (*as she hands it back*). Nonsense. It's the prettiest kind of a design and the prettiest kind of a name. Suppose you make the three leaves symbolize Work—Health—and Love.

BETH. Instead of standing for Coward—Yellow-streak—and Fraidy-cat. (*Cheerfully.*) I'll try to live up to my name.

MISS CARTER. Every true Camp Fire girl should try to live up to her name. I've always desired above all things to be like my cedar tree—faithful and enduring.

CLARE. And you are. Who is better able to judge than your own girls? (*Pauses.*) And I sound like a soda fountain, I'm told.

MISS CARTER (*laughing*). This is rather discouraging to one who has aimed for the wisdom of the owl, isn't it? Never mind, Clare.

CLARE. I don't. (*With a side glance at IRENE.*) Even when contrasted with Happy Laughter.

IRENE. Isn't that a decorative term for my giggle?

ELSIE (*rising and running to MISS CARTER*). No danger of my not living up to *my* name, is there, Miss Carter? (*Stands at her right.*)

MISS CARTER. Dancing Girl! Hardly. Sometimes I wonder if your feet haven't the little wings of Hermes all hidden away from mortal sight.

ELSIE. Maybe they have.

ETHEL (*rising and running to MISS CARTER's left*). And I don't want to live up to my name.

MISS CARTER (*laughing*). Little Hailstorm! Why not?

ETHEL. It isn't exactly complimentary.

MISS CARTER. But a hailstorm is exceedingly useful.

ETHEL. How?

MISS CARTER. Doesn't it usually stir up things? (*Looks around.*) Where's Migwan the Quill?

CLARE. Gone for the mail.

MISS CARTER. Alibamu?

CLARE. She went, too.

ELSIE. There's a proper name for a Wood Gatherer. Clear-the-thicket.

ETHEL. Don't like it. Alibamu makes me think of the Forty Thieves.

ELSIE. And Olive certainly overdoes the Quill business. There's no use in being literary morning, noon and night.

MISS CARTER (*glancing at her watch*). It's time that they were back.

BETH. Perhaps they stopped at the hotel. Three of our friends have just registered for the summer.

CLARE. A modern, up-to-date hotel seems out of place in this lovely quiet spot. Why did they build it here, Miss Carter, and just a stone's throw from us?

MISS CARTER. Just because it *is* such a lovely, quiet spot, I suppose.

CLARE. But, as a rule, summer hotel people do not care for Mother Nature.

MISS CARTER. Perhaps this is the exception.

IRENE. Ceremonials tonight, Miss Carter?

MISS CARTER. Right here. (*As she looks around.*) You're keeping the special honors in mind, I hope.

ETHEL. Keeping them in mind? Well, rather.

ELSIE. It's working up to them that counts.

BETH. Name them over again, Miss Carter. Not that I expect to get any of them. (*Sighs.*) Being a coward is such a handicap.

MISS CARTER. Well, there's the honor called Uta. That stands for effort—real effort.

BETH. Such as trying to be brave when you are shaking in your boots?

MISS CARTER. Exactly. Then there's Keda—that means *think hard*.

ETHEL. Oh, dear! What chance for wisdom have we when there's a wise old owl in our midst!

CLARE. Don't be foolish, Ethel. What's the next, Miss Carter?

MISS CARTER. Shuta—to create.

ELSIE. Create—*what?*

MISS CARTER. That's for each one of you to determine.

IRENE. And the last one?

MISS CARTER. Wakan. Inspiration.

BETH. I don't exactly understand.

MISS CARTER. Inspiration we may give to each other or be to each other. If we watch for it tonight we shall find it—

CLARE (*quickly*). In the Camp Fire circle. Isn't it true, Miss Carter?

MISS CARTER. Spoken like a true Torch Bearer.

IRENE. There will be a moon tonight.

BETH. Thunder moon for July. And it's copper colored.

ETHEL. Gorgeous!

BETH. And there'll be the red gypsy star of Aldebaran.

MISS CARTER. The gypsy star makes me think of the gypsy band.

ETHEL. I'd love to see a real gypsy band.

MISS CARTER. But that is just what you must not do. For there *is* one near by.

ETHEL. Real gypsies?

MISS CARTER. Real gypsies. Promise me you won't go near their camp.

CLARE. Of course we promise. But why, Miss Carter?

MISS CARTER. They are not very reliable citizens, my dear.

BETH. Would they kidnap us?

MISS CARTER (*laughing*). Perhaps.

BETH. Then I'll stay close to camp.

*At this moment MANDY appears from R., every tight pig-tail in place and an expansive grin as she beholds the girls.*

MISS CARTER. And as long as you stay in camp you're safe. Everybody is having so beautiful a time that nothing must mar it.

CLARE (*laughing*). Why, Miss Carter, you look positively frightened. Cheer up—nothing will happen.

MISS CARTER (*rising*). Of course nothing will happen. (*ELSIE and ETHEL return to their former positions and pick up the Ouija board.*)

MANDY (*at gate*). Land sakes, Miss Cyahtah. Ain't you gwine rap wood arter sayin' *dat*?

MISS CARTER (*turning*). Why, Mandy—you startled me.

MANDY. Ain't you gwine rap wood, Miss Cyahtah? Fur jes' as sure as you *don't*, somethin' is gwine to happen.

MISS CARTER. Nonsense, Mandy. Camp Fire girls don't believe in things like *that*. And what good could come of rapping wood?

MANDY (*in a sepulchral tone*). It breaks de charm.

MISS CARTER. We don't believe in that sort of charm, do we, girls? Our charm depends upon such things as work and health and love. (*As she goes to L. 2 E.*) I've a letter to write so I'll see you all later. (*Exit.*)

ELSIE. Sit down, Mandy, and make yourself at home.

(MANDY *seats herself by tree.*)

ETHEL. What makes you so solemn?

MANDY. I'se jes' been to de lane whar de ha'nts is.

BETH. *Ha'nts*? What are they?

MANDY. Ghosties.

BETH. Good gracious! I didn't know that you had *them* here.

CLARE. Don't be silly, Beth. (*Hesitatingly, after a pause.*) Whose ghost is it, Mandy?

MANDY. It's ol' Marse. An' he's huntin' fur all dat stuff dat he done hid away.

BETH (*in a relieved tone*). Then he doesn't need me to help him.

ELSIE (*severely*). There's no such thing as a ghost, Mandy.

MANDY. Ain't you never felt de col' air hit you suddent like, Miss Elsie?

ELSIE. Well,—y-e-s—

MANDY (*impressively*). Dat's de ha'nts a-passin'—de ha'nts!



ETHEL (*shuddering*). Ugh!

MANDY (*pointing to the Ouija board*). What's dat dar li'l table?

ELSIE. It moves—and answers questions—and—

MANDY (*eagerly*). Sperrits?

BETH. O-h-h! Let's talk about something else. (*Holds out basket.*) See my pretty basket.

MANDY (*as she takes it*). Lan' sakes, Miss Beth, what you want wid three leaf clovers?

BETH. Because it's my name and my sign.

MANDY. Why ain't you makin' it four leaf? Den it would bring you luck. (*Hands back the basket.*)

BETH. I don't need any particular luck.

MANDY (*significantly*). Oh—*don't* you!

BETH. What do you mean?

MANDY. I seed you walk under a ladder dis mornin'.

BETH. Well, what of it?

MANDY. Ain't you never heard dat it brings bad luck to walk under a ladder?

BETH. Always?

MANDY. Of co'se.

BETH (*nervously*). Isn't there any way of breaking such a charm?

MANDY. Not 'less a black cat runs in front of you.

IRENE (*rising*). I never heard such nonsense. Come on, Clare. Let's take our walk, now that it's cooled off a bit. (*Walks to C.*)

CLARE (*rising*). Coming!

IRENE (*as she turns back*). Just a moment! I've forgotten my thimble.

MANDY (*shrieking*). Don't do dat, Miss Renie—don't do dat!

IRENE. For pity's sake, Mandy, what's the matter now?

MANDY (*rocking back and forth*). Ain't you got better sense'n to turn back arter you've started?

IRENE (*recovering her thimble*). You get on my nerves. (*To CLARE, who has strolled to L. & E.*) Wait, Clare. (*Hurries to her and they go out together.*)

BETH. We don't believe in signs and superstitions, Mandy, we Camp Fire girls.

MANDY. Real Injuns do.

BETH. But we're not real Indians—and—anyway—well, we just *don't*—that's all. (*After a pause.*) Has anybody ever seen that ghost—down there? (*With a movement of her hand.*)

MANDY. Well, I reckon they has. Jes' a week ago—

CHARLOTTE and OLIVE appear at L., CHARLOTTE in khaki outing suit is jolly and boyish in manner. OLIVE, in gingham dress, has the preoccupied look of a budding genius. Each carries a bundle of mail.

ELSIE (*as she catches sight of the newcomers*). Oh, there come the girls! Any mail for me, Charlotte? (ELSIE, ETHEL and BETH crowd around CHARLOTTE as she comes through the gate and walks slowly down stage.)

CHARLOTTE. Watch out there—don't grab. Here's a paper for you, Elsie, and a letter for Ethel. (*Hands them out.*) No—nothing for you, Beth.

BETH (*as she turns away*). Oh dear—oh dear—oh dear!

CHARLOTTE. All these are for the others. Here, Mandy—take them in for me. (MANDY rises reluctantly.) Oh, come now! If you'll do this for me I'll give you that string of beads you want—

MANDY. Hones'. Miss Ch'lotte?

CHARLOTTE. Honest to goodness. (*As MANDY takes the papers and letters.*) That's a good sport. Keep on doing errands and you may get to be a Wood Gatherer.

MANDY. Don' wan' to be any mo' of a Wood Gatherer dan I is now.

CHARLOTTE. Then you'll never be a Camp Fire girl.

MANDY. Don' wan' to be no play Injun.

CHARLOTTE. Well, that'll be all right with us. (*Seats herself by tree as MANDY goes slowly off L. 2 E.*)

ETHEL. Come on in, Olive, and make yourself comfortable.

OLIVE (*dramatically as she leans over the gate*). I've news!

BETH. What kind of news? (*Runs to her right.*)

OLIVE. Wonderful news!

ETHEL. Tell us. (*Joins BETH.*)

OLIVE. Guess!

ELSIE (*running to her left*). The treasure has been found!

OLIVE. More important than that.

ETHEL. The hotel's on fire!

OLIVE. Don't be silly.

BETH. Well, tell us, then. Come on, Charlotte, and hear the news.

CHARLOTTE (*who in the meantime has been visibly bored*). Don't bother about me. I've heard it every minute of every step since we left the post office.

ETHEL. How silly of you to keep us in suspense.

OLIVE. Then—look! (*Holds out copy of a Camp Fire magazine.*)

ELSIE. Well, what's so strange about that?

BETH (*examining it*). The cover hasn't changed any.

OLIVE (*significantly*). But the inside has—

ETHEL. Naturally. It's a new number, isn't it?

OLIVE. Can't—you—guess—what—I mean?

BETH (*suddenly*). Oh, Olive! Not—*really*?

OLIVE. Really.

ELSIE. You're not telling us that—that—(*takes the magazine*).

OLIVE. But I *am*.

ETHEL. Your story's printed—actually *printed*?

OLIVE. Just look and see.

(*ETHEL, ELSIE and BETH eagerly examine the magazine. CHARLOTTE looks still more bored.*)

BETH. There's her name—big as life—Olive Parr Miller.

CHARLOTTE (*sharply*). Didn't expect her to use a *nom de plume*, did you?

OLIVE (*complacently*). Lots of authors do.

CHARLOTTE. Of course *they* do!

ETHEL (*pointing*). And it's about *us*. Look, Beth. There's my name.

ELSIE. And mine, too. (*After a pause.*) Oh—we're all here.

CHARLOTTE. But not easily recognized.

OLIVE (*sharply*). Now what do you mean by that?

CHARLOTTE. Only this, my dear—that our very ordinary characteristics are magnified until they become downright charms.

ELSIE. Then we'll sit right down and read every single bit. (*Comes down stage followed by BETH and ETHEL.*)

CHARLOTTE. No, you won't. Company is on its way.

ETHEL. *Company?*

CHARLOTTE. Your three particular pals over at the hotel are descending upon you.

ETHEL. Really?

CHARLOTTE. Really. They should be almost here by this time. (*Rises, comes to gate and looks off L.*) They are. Some guests, too. High-heeled slippers, fluffy ruffles and picture hats. (*Opens gate.*) Come on, old pal. (*Pulls OLIVE inside.*) We're better in the background.

OLIVE (*protesting as CHARLOTTE pushes her toward L. 2 E.*). But—Charlotte—

CHARLOTTE. Never mind—the story'll wait. (*Turns.*) Now don't let those paper dolls get the best of you, but stand up for the Camp Fire. (*CHARLOTTE and OLIVE go off at L. 2 E.*)

ETHEL. What does she mean?

ELSIE. Warning us, I suppose, that we must not allow them to criticise. (*Spitefully.*) Elma is a snob.

ETHEL. Nita thinks of nothing but boys.

BETH. And Hazel is a fashion plate. (*Laughs.*) Dear me, aren't we a set of cats!

ELSIE. No wonder that Charlotte tells us to stand up for the Camp Fire. (*As HAZEL, NITA and ELMA appear at L.*) Hush—here they are.

*Three visions in dainty summer apparel put to shame the camp outfits of the hostesses. Large flower-laden hats, many ruffles and rainbow parasols add to the glory of the occasion.*

BETH (*running to the gate and opening it*). Welcome to the Camp Fire!

ETHEL (*following*). And to the Camp Fire girls.

ELSIE. And to the Camp Fire good times.

*Chattering and exchanging greetings, the six girls crowd through the gate and come down stage.*

ELSIE (*dragging HAZEL to the tree*). We'll sit here, Hazel.

ETHEL. Then Nita and I shall take the summer house. (*They cross.*)

BETH (*coming to front of stage*). And Elma and I will sit here on the grass. (*As ELMA hesitates.*) You don't mind, do you, Elma? (*Sits.*)

ELMA (*unenthusiastically as she follows suit*). N-o-o, I guess not. Just so it doesn't hurt my dress.

BETH. It won't.

ELMA. Of course it won't hurt *yours*. (*Critically.*) Don't you ever dress for dinner?

BETH (*cheerfully*). Not unless we wish. And we seldom wish.

HAZEL (*looking around*). Isn't it primitive here?

ELSIE. Depends on what you call primitive.

HAZEL. Well—countryfied.

ELSIE. I'd call it country-ish—not countryfied.

HAZEL. I don't see the difference.

ELSIE (*after a pause*). No—you wouldn't see.

NITA. Don't you ever see a boy?

ETHEL. Lots of them—if we wish. But—as Beth says—we seldom wish.

ELMA. All this outdoor stuff—and Indian names—and ceremonial meetings sound silly.

BETH. I suppose it does—to you.

ELMA. What good does it do?

BETH. Well, for one thing—(*points*)—what kind of a bird is that?

ELMA (*pettishly*). How should I know?

BETH. Well, we *do* know—thanks to the Camp Fire. And we know lots of other things about the woods, the flowers and the big out-of-doors.

ETHEL. And look at us! We're so healthy that it hurts—thanks to the Camp Fire.

NITA. Well, we're healthy, too.

ELSIE. Not exactly in the same way. We don't know what nerves are—and we'd be utterly disgraced if we ever had a headache.

ETHEL. And we learn to depend upon ourselves—and not to be afraid of anything that comes our way.

ELMA. Well—Beth certainly must have changed. She used to be the biggest coward in the crowd.

BETH. I'm not really brave, yet—but the Camp Fire is helping me.

ELMA. How silly! I'd like to give you the big scare of your life and see how much the Camp Fire has to do with it.

BETH. You always *could* think of nice things to do for people, Elma.

ELSIE (*hastily*). Well, how do *you* pass your time?

NITA. Oh, we ride—and motor—and play bridge—and then there are the dances.

HAZEL. Last night we had a picnic.

ETHEL (*enthusiastically*). Out on the river bank? And did you make your own fire and cook your own bacon?

HAZEL. Certainly we didn't. The hotel chef put up our lunch and we went to a little cave to eat it.

BETH. That's no picnic. It's just eating your supper out of doors.

ELSIE. Not even out of doors. Why on earth did you choose a cave?

HAZEL. Because we wanted it. It's a cunning cave—and it's just up the road a bit.

BETH. Then it's Miss Jane's cave—right here on her land.

HAZEL. I suppose it is. Don't you ever go there?

ETHEL. Of course we've seen it—but we'd rather be out of doors—and tramp around.

NITA. And act like a lot of gypsies. You ought to join the crowd that's camping in the valley back of the hotel.

BETH (*eagerly*). Have you seen them?

NITA. Why of course we have. They sell things at the hotel—and tell fortunes—and—

BETH. You've talked to them?

NITA. Why not? They're horrid, dirty creatures but they're interesting.

BETH. I'd be scared to death if one of them even spoke to me.

ELMA. Oh—*would* you? I thought that the Camp Fire was making you so brave and so self-reliant that you couldn't be afraid of anything.

BETH. It is. (*Pauses.*) And I'm going to prove it.

ELMA. How?

BETH. By meeting the next emergency according to Camp Fire teaching.

ELMA. But you won't. Just wait until the scare comes and you'll be the same old Beth.

BETH. Try me and see.

ELMA. I wish I *could*! (*Suddenly.*) But I know what I *can* do.

BETH. And what's that?

ELMA. Wager my new ring that you haven't nerve enough to meet the emergency.

BETH (*catching her hand and looking closely at the ring*). It's a sporting chance—and a good-looking ring. I'll take both.

ELSIE. What a silly wager! What will you call an emergency, Elma, and how will you know whether Beth meets it or not?

ELMA. I'll know all right. (*Rises.*) Come along, girls we've made our call and must be off. (*BETH rises.*)

NITA. But I'm not ready to go—I'm not ready at all.

HAZEL. And I haven't begun to tell all I had to tell.

ELMA. Can't help it. It's almost dinner time.

NITA. But it's not five minutes walk to the hotel. We've loads of time. (*Rises reluctantly.*)

ELMA. Not for what I want to say to you. I've a plan—a perfectly corking plan—and I want to find out if you people approve.

ELSIE. But aren't *we* in the plan?

ELMA. I shouldn't wonder.

ETHEL. Then talk it over right here.

ELMA. But it's to to be a surprise—and it will show you that Camp Fire girls haven't a monopoly upon all the ideas.

ELSIE. Oh, come now, Elma, who said anything about a monopoly of ideas?

ELMA. You act it just the same. (*Catches HAZEL's hand and pulls her to the gate.*) Come along—please.

HAZEL (*as they pass through the gate*). I don't want to go—but you see how it is.

ELSIE (*following*). No—I don't see.

ETHEL (*who has crossed with NITA*). And if it were not for the perfectly corking plan which is to be shared with us—

ELMA. Perhaps—

ETHEL. *Perhaps*, then—I'd be downright cross with the whole lot of you.

NITA (*passing through the gate*). Count me out, Ethel, for I don't want to go a bit.

ELSIE. Then won't you come back soon—very soon—and make up for it?

NITA. I'll try. (*Calling "goodbye" and waving their hands, the three go off at L. with the excited ELMA in the lead.*)

ELSIE (*thoughtfully*). Well, for an abrupt and unexpected departure that certainly can't be equalled.

ETHEL. Elma has something up her sleeve—you may depend on it. (*Joins BETH.*) Why on earth did you enter into that ridiculous wager?

BETH. Why shouldn't I? It isn't pleasant to have one's cowardice publicly announced.

ELSIE. Any more than it's safe to let Elma get the upper hand.

BETH (*pettishly*). Wait till she gets the upper hand.

*And immediately a strange silence and gloom seems to descend upon them as they seat themselves listlessly at the front of the stage. Perhaps it is just the inevitable weariness that follows a busy day; it may be the memory of picture hats, high heels and fluffy ruffles; but, whatever the cause, its effect is evident. And as they sit in quiet contemplation, a GYPSY enters at R.—so stealthily that her pres-*



ence is not known. She is a pretty gypsy—a picturesque gypsy—and her gay skirt, scarf and beads lack the tawdriness which is often characteristic of the wandering tribe.)

ETHEL (*sighing*). It would be a change to wear something more ornamental than a middy blouse.

ELSIE. And it would be *heavenly* to dance tonight.

BETH. Oh, if something exciting would only happen!

THE GYPSY (*who is leaning over the gate, smilingly regarding them*). Shall I tell you what the future holds? (*The girls rise in alarm as she comes through the gate.*) Cross my palm with silver and all my secrets will be yours. (*BETH and ELSIE withdraw to R.*)

ETHEL (*with an attempt at composure*). What—do—you want?

THE GYPSY (*holding out hand*). Your hand.

ETHEL. But I have no money.

THE GYPSY (*whcedlingly*). Just a piece of silver!

BETH (*pulling ETHEL to her*). Miss Carter wouldn't approve.

ETHEL. We're not disobeying. She came to us—and it's fun.

ELSIE. And I've never had my fortune told.

BETH. Please don't, Elsie.

ELSIE. You're scared—that's what's the matter with you.

ETHEL. Be a sport.

BETH. I won't.

ELSIE. Then I will. (*Draws coin from pocket*). Here, Ethel, I have a quarter—do you suppose she will take *that*?

ETHEL (*taking the money and turning*). Will a quarter do?

THE GYPSY (*smiling*). Cross my palm. (*As ETHEL places the coin in her hand, THE GYPSY draws her down beside her and looks steadily at her palm.*)

ETHEL (*squirming*). Hurry up!

THE GYPSY (*in a droning tone*). Flowers—birds—the open sky—you love them all—

ETHEL (*eagerly*). Yes—oh, yes!

THE GYPSY. And yet—when the flowers are brightest, they droop their heads; when the birds are gayest they cease

their song; when the sky is bluest there comes a cloud—and then—(*hesitates*)—

ETHEL. Yes?

THE GYPSY. The hailstorm!

ETHEL (*curiously*). How do you know my name?

THE GYPSY (*shaking head*). I know only your fate. Into the sunshine the hailstorm—

ETHEL. What do you mean?

THE GYPSY. Skies are very blue, little lady—while they last; flowers are very beautiful—until they fade.

ETHEL (*drawing away her hand*). I don't like to hear you say these things—

THE GYPSY. 'Tis the lines in your hand that say them—

ETHEL. Then—read between the lines. (*Offers her hand again.*)

THE GYPSY (*dreamily*). The ocean—a ship—you're going to take a long journey.

ETHEL. What else?

THE GYPSY. I see strange people—strange lands—

ETHEL. Yes—yes—and—(*hesitatingly*). Do you see the man I'm going to marry?

THE GYPSY (*dropping her hand, shrugging her shoulders and laughing craftily*). Another coin for *that*, little lady!

ELSIE (*pushing ETHEL to one side*). It's my time, anyway.

THE GYPSY (*as she takes ELSIE's hand and bends over it*). Watch your steps.

ELSIE. Good gracious!

THE GYPSY. They may carry you into forbidden ways.

ELSIE. But they are dancing steps.

THE GYPSY. Dancing steps won't take you to the end of your journey.

ELSIE (*in disgust*). Is that all you see in my hand?

THE GYPSY. That's all—except the pleasant times and pretty things that friends and money can give.

ELSIE (*as she rises*). Well, that isn't much of a fortune. Your turn, Beth.

BETH (*violently shaking her head*). No.

ETHEL. Go on, Beth. She can't hurt you.

THE GYPSY. Is the little lady afraid?

BETH. No, I'm not afraid.

THE GYPSY. Then—come.

BETH. But I don't want to come. I *won't*.

THE GYPSY. If you won't come to fortune—misfortune may come to you.

BETH. What do you mean?

THE GYPSY (*rising and slowly backing to gate*). Something's going to happen, little lady—something's going to happen.

BETH. You must not say such things to me—you must not.

THE GYPSY (*as she passes through the gate*). You're afraid—you're afraid! (*Her expression changes, her wheedling tone goes and she speaks angrily*). And you're too good to touch a gypsy, are you? Then watch out, I tell you—watch out! (*As she passes out at R., leaving three very frightened maidens behind her.*)

ETHEL. Now you've done it, Beth.

BETH. I've done nothing.

ELSIE. That's just it. If you had acted sensibly, there wouldn't have been all this trouble.

BETH. But I didn't like her—and you shouldn't have let her in.

ETHEL. *Let her in?* She just came.

ELSIE (*thoughtfully*). But I don't think that she gave us a quarter's worth of fortune, do you?

ETHEL. Well—she called me hailstorm.

BETH. She did not. She just happened to mention a hailstorm.

ETHEL. Same thing. Then she told me about a long, long trip—and we *are* planning to go to Europe, you know.

BETH. They always tell *that*. (*Pauses.*) Anyway, I don't think that Miss Carter would have approved.

ETHEL. Well, it's too late to bother about that. And I don't see what harm there was in listening. (*Pauses.*) She was certainly mad at you, Beth.

ELSIE (*putting an arm about her shoulder*). You're not worrying over what she said to you—are you, Beth?

BETH. No, of course not.

ELSIE. For she was just trying to pay you back for not giving her another quarter. (*Pauses.*) I still think that we didn't get a quarter's worth of fortune.

ETHEL (*yearning*). Well, let's argue it out in the house. I want to rest a bit before supper.

*Enter MANDY from L. 2 E.*

MANDY. Miss Jane say who gwine to Miss Smith's fur de eggs.

BETH. Good gracious! I promised to do that very thing—and I forgot all about it.

ELSIE. No wonder—after all the excitement of the afternoon.

BETH. So run on, the two of you, and I'll do the errand right away.

ETHEL. It's a good mile over to the Smiths—you'll have to hurry if you want to get back by supper-time.

BETH (*as ETHEL and ELSIE pass out L. 2 E.*). I'll hurry. (*Starts to gate.*)

MANDY. Wait jes' a moment, Miss Beth.

BETH (*turning*). What is it?

MANDY (*at C.*). Look! (*Draws flash light from dress.*)

BETH (*coming to her*). Mandy! My flash light! Where did you find it?

MANDY. Way under de lilac bush.

BETH. Right beneath my window? (MANDY *nods*.) Then it rolled off my window sill.

MANDY. What you gwine give me, Miss Beth, fur findin' it?

BETH. Most anything you want, Mandy—'cause I'm pretty glad to have this again.

MANDY. 'Fraid of de dark, Miss Beth?

BETH. Sometimes, Mandy.

*And while they are talking, THREE GYPSIES, whose floating scarfs and shawls almost hide their faces, creep stealthily from R., quietly open the gate and approach BETH and MANDY, whose backs are toward them. As BETH turns, a hand is placed over her mouth, she is blindfolded, and two*

*of the gypsies, in spite of her struggles, push her through the gate. MANDY, who is paralyzed with terror, is held firmly in the grasp of the third marauder.*

THIRD GYPSY (*in a low tone*). You haven't seen a thing and you haven't heard a thing. *Do you understand?* (MANDY *tries to speak*.) And if you dare to tell, we'll get you—we'll get you sure. Now—will you promise?

(*And MANDY's head nods violently up and down as the curtain descends.*)

CURTAIN.

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ACT II.

SCENE: *Same as Act I—later on. It is early twilight, yet light enough to distinguish figures clearly. As the curtain rises, CLARE, IRENE, CHARLOTTE, OLIVE, ETHEL and ELSIE, in Camp Fire ceremonial garb, are dancing to the accompaniment of their own weird and monotonous chant of an Indian song. As the last note dies away, they sink exhausted on the ground in a semi-circle.*

ETHEL. Even if the sun *has* gone down, it's still too hot for any violent exercise.

ELSIE. I wish we had planned this ceremonial for later on—*much* later on when the moon is up.

CHARLOTTE. Miss Carter intends to wait until it is quite dark, I believe.

OLIVE. Well, if Beth doesn't return pretty soon, it will be midnight before we have a chance to begin.

IRENE. Where can she be? It isn't like Beth to linger on any errand.

CLARE. And the Smith family is not so attractive that she would enjoy a prolonged visit with its members.

ETHEL. She said she'd hurry—and she surely ought to be back by this time.

ELSIE. Remember that we had an early supper.

ETHEL. But it took us quite a while to put on our ceremonials and—well, even so—she ought to be here.

OLIVE. Surely nothing could have happened to her. It's a straight path over the hill and everybody uses it.

CHARLOTTE. Just the same, I think Miss Carter is worried.

IRENE. I *know* she is. I heard her ask the gardener's little son to ride his wheel over to Smith's and to *hurry*.

CLARE. Could she have stopped at the hotel with the girls?

ETHEL. In those clothes? Not much.

ELSIE. And especially after she had that disagreement with Elma.

CHARLOTTE. Anyway, Beth would never miss ceremonials if she could help it. (*Pauses.*) I'm rather worried myself.

CLARE. Dear me! I hope she didn't wander near that gypsy camp Miss Carter mentioned.

ETHEL. *Gypsy camp!* (*Looks at ELSIE.*) *Oh!*

ELSIE. Oh, Ethel—do you suppose that—the gypsy—really could—oh, I never thought of *that!*

IRENE. Thought of what?

ELSIE. Tell her, Ethel.

ETHEL. No—you—

ELSIE. I won't.

CHARLOTTE. Now, look here—something's wrong and somebody knows something she ought to tell. Out with it!

CLARE. Has it anything to do with the gypsy camp?

ETHEL. No—not exactly.

IRENE. Then why did you mention a gypsy?

ELSIE. Honest to goodness—it wasn't our fault.

CHARLOTTE. *What* wasn't your fault?

ELSIE. The gypsy.

OLIVE. Then there *was* a gypsy.

ETHEL. But we didn't call her—

ELSIE. She just came.

CLARE. But Miss Carter had warned you against them.

ETHEL. She hadn't told us not to speak to one.

ELSIE. Especially if she came in the gate without anyone seeing her.

CHARLOTTE. Oh—so she came in the gate, did she?

ETHEL. Of course she did.

IRENE. And why didn't you tell her to go?

ELSIE. Because we wanted our palms read.

CLARE. Even when Miss Carter had asked us all not to have anything to do with these gypsies?

ETHEL. Oh, we didn't mean to disobey.

CLARE. After she had told your fortunes did you send her away?

ELSIE. She didn't tell Beth's fortune.

IRENE. Why?

ELSIE. Beth was afraid—and anyway, she felt that Miss Carter wouldn't approve.

CHARLOTTE. And she certainly would *not*.

ETHEL. And the gypsy was angry with her. (*Wailingly.*) Oh, Elsie, do you suppose that Beth—that the gypsy—oh, it *couldn't* be so!

CHARLOTTE. Then there's some more to the story, is there?

CLARE. Ethel, tell us quickly what happened.

ETHEL. Nothing *happened*. But as the gypsy was going out of the gate—(*hesitates*)

IRENE (*impatiently*). Go on—

ETHEL. She turned to Beth—and she said that something would happen to her—that—

CLARE. Why didn't you tell us that at first—*why* didn't you?

ETHEL. How could we think that it had anything to do with Beth's absence? Why, we never thought *anything*—and—oh, Clare—do you think that she's really *stolen*?

MISS CARTER *enters from L. 2 E.*

CLARE. I don't know what to think. (*Rises.*) Anyway, I must tell Miss Carter immediately.

MISS CARTER. Tell me—what? (*The girls rise.*)

CLARE. Something about Beth. (*As she notes MISS CARTER's worried expression.*) Oh, Miss Carter—what is the matter? (*Goes to her.*)

MISS CARTER. I've just discovered that Beth never arrived at the Smith's.

IRENE. Oh! (*Crosses to her.*)

MISS CARTER. And no one has seen her—or knows of her  
(*Glancing around.*) Who has something to tell?

(ETHEL and ELSIE stand speechless.)

CHARLOTTE (*crossing to MISS CARTER*). Miss Carter—  
this afternoon a gypsy came—here.

MISS CARTER. A gypsy?

ETHEL. Oh, Miss Carter, we didn't mean to disobey.

ELSIE. We just thought it would be fun to have our fortunes told—

MISS CARTER. Yes—yes—but what about *Beth*?

CHARLOTTE. Beth wouldn't go near her. She felt that you wouldn't approve.

MISS CARTER. And what happened?

CHARLOTTE. The gypsy became angry and threatened her.

MISS CARTER. *Threatened* her?

CHARLOTTE. Told her that something would happen.

IRENE. But nothing could happen—here—and they couldn't have stolen her in broad daylight, could they?

ETHEL. Oh, Miss Carter, Miss Carter, can you ever forgive us?

ELSIE. For we'll never forgive ourselves. (*They run to her.*)

MISS CARTER (*pushing them away.*) There isn't time to discuss—that—girls. What we want to do is to find Beth. Who was with her last?

ETHEL (*as she and ELSIE rejoin OLIVE at R.*). We left her—here—just before supper. She said she would hurry back—

MISS CARTER (*interrupting*). Just the three of you were here?

ETHEL. Just the three of us.

ELSIE (*suddenly*). There was Mandy.

ETHEL. Oh, yes—Mandy.

MISS CARTER. Where is Mandy?

OLIVE. She's washing dishes—and acting queer.

CHARLOTTE. Queer?

OLIVE. Scared to death about something.

MISS CARTER (*as she crosses to R.*) Olive, will you ask



her to come to me—immediately? (*OLIVE goes out L. 2 E.*)

CLARE. Surely Mandy would have told us if she had known anything.

IRENE. Unless, in some way, it conflicted with her idea of good luck.

ETHEL. But, Miss Carter, we were here with Beth at the same time Mandy was. She won't know any more than we.

MISS CARTER. At any rate, we'll see. How long has Beth been gone?

ETHEL. Let me see. It was just before supper—and we had early supper—and then we changed into our Indian dresses. Why, it must be almost an hour and a half.

*And just here OLIVE enters, struggling with a refractory MANDY.*

OLIVE. Here she is, Miss Carter—and she didn't want to come a bit. (*Pushes her to MISS CARTER and stands with CLARE and IRENE.*)

MANDY. I don' know nothin', Miss Cyahtah—I don' know nothin'.

MISS CARTER. Then it won't take you long to answer my questions. (*Pauses.*) Were you here with Miss Beth after the other girls left her?

MANDY. Yas'm.

MISS CARTER. What happened after that?

MANDY (*sulkily*). Nothin' happened. Miss Beth done start atter de eggs.

MISS CARTER. Did you say anything to her?

MANDY. I gib her de flash light.

MISS CARTER. What flash light?

MANDY. Her flash light what wuz los'. I foun' it under de lilac bush.

MISS CARTER. And then—

MANDY. What fur you ask me *den*? I tol' you she done gone atter de eggs.

MISS CARTER. And I don't think you are telling me everything you know.

MANDY (*excitedly*). I is—I is—

MISS CARTER. Be very careful, Mandy. If you know

anything about Miss Beth and you keep it from us, you're going to suffer.

MANDY (*wildly*). Miss Cyahtah, dey will git me ef I tell!

MISS CARTER. Who'll get you?

MANDY. De gypsies.

MISS CARTER. *The gypsies?* (*Shakes MANDY.*) Tell me—where were the gypsies?

MANDY. Here—right here. (*Wildly.*) She'll git me ef I tell!

MISS CARTER. She'll *not* get you—I promise. Now quiet down and tell me just what happened.

MANDY. Miss Beth an' me wuz talkin'—here (*points*) about de flash light—an' 'fore we knowed what wuz happenin' one uv de gypsies grabbed me an' two uv dem grabbed Miss Beth.

MISS CARTER. Two of them!

MANDY. An' while de gypsy tell me to be quiet an' dat somethin' gwine happen ef I tell—de udder gypsies whisk Miss Beth clear 'way.

MISS CARTER. And you didn't see her again?

MANDY. I didn't see her no mo'. When de gypsy let me go I runned in de house.

CLARE. Miss Carter, do you think that a stray gypsy would dare do a thing like this—on so slight a provocation?

MISS CARTER. I hardly know what to think, but I shall go immediately to the gypsy camp and investigate. (*To MANDY.*) That will do, Mandy—go back into the house until we need you. (*Turns to ETHEL.*) Can you identify the gypsy, Ethel? (*MANDY withdraws reluctantly at L. 2 E.*)

ETHEL. Oh, I'm sure that I *could*.

ELSIE (*wailing*). It's all our fault—it's all our fault!

ELMA *appears at L.*

MISS CARTER. Then listen. Clare, will you ask Miss Jane to see that a search party is organized? (*CLARE nods.*) Ethel and I shall go to the camp—and, Charlotte, you may go with us—while Olive and—

ELMA (*running to gate*). Miss Carter! Miss Carter!

MISS CARTER. Elma? (*As ELMA starts to speak.*) I haven't time to talk to you, my dear. Beth is lost and (*starts to gate, followed by ETHEL and CHARLOTTE*).

ELMA. Oh, I know—I know—that's why we're here.

HAZEL and NITA *come timidly from L. and join her at gate.*

MISS CARTER. And we're on our way to the gypsy camp, for we've every reason to believe that some gypsies are responsible for her disappearance.

ELMA. Miss Carter, please don't be cross with us—please don't—for we were the gypsies.

MISS CARTER. You were the *gypsies*? I don't understand.

ELMA. We dressed as gypsies—because Beth had said that they scared her—and then we blindfolded her—and made the little darkey promise she wouldn't tell. It was a joke—really it was!

MISS CARTER. Then where is Beth?

ELMA. That's the dreadful part—for we don't know.

MISS CARTER. Tell me about it—quickly.

ELMA. This afternoon I made a wager with Beth that even the Camp Fire couldn't keep her from being scared—and she took it.

MISS CARTER (*opening the gate and pushing the three girls into the yard*). Why should you make such a wager? (*CHARLOTTE and ETHEL come down stage to L. 2 E., while CLARE and IRENE cross to R.*)

ELMA (*as she and MISS CARTER stand at C.*). Because she had owned up to being a coward—and had said that the Camp Fire would help her face the first emergency that came her way. (*HAZEL and NITA stand at MISS CARTER's left.*)

MISS CARTER. And you *dared* to do a thing like this?

ELMA. I never dreamed it would end like this—I thought it would be a good joke.

MISS CARTER. To frighten her—perhaps so seriously that it would result in an illness? That is not my idea of a joke.

HAZEL. I didn't want to do it—I really didn't.

NITA. But Elma made us and—

MISS CARTER. You are all to blame. Where did you take her?

ELMA. To the cave.

MISS CARTER. What cave?

ELMA. The one just up the road a bit.

CLARE. It's on Miss Jane's land, Miss Carter. You remember.

MISS CARTER. Then why haven't you released her?

ELMA. Because—because—oh—oh—she isn't there!

MISS CARTER (*after a pause*). What do you mean?

HAZEL. After we put her in the cave we fastened the door—

NITA. It's an old wooden door and latches on the outside.

HAZEL. Went back to the hotel, took off our gypsy dresses, hurried through our dinner, ran off to the cave—and—

MISS CARTER (*sharply*). Yes?

HAZEL. When we opened the door—she wasn't there.

ELMA. She *couldn't* have escaped, Miss Carter—for the door can't be opened from the inside.

MISS CARTER. And knowing this—you left that child—alone—frightened. (*Angrily*.) Oh, I have no words to tell you how angry I am!

ELMA. But we're sorry—so sorry—and—

MISS CARTER. Does that bring her back? And how do you know that she hasn't been suffocated in that cave? No air, no light—

MISS JANE *who in the meantime has entered from L. 2 E.*

MISS JANE. Of what cave are you speaking, Miss Carter?

MISS CARTER. The cave up the road.

CLARE. On your land, Miss Jane.

IRENE. Beth was left there—as a practical joke—and now she has disappeared.

MISS JANE. But she *couldn't* disappear if the door were latched, for there is no other exit or entrance. She is hiding from you.

MISS CARTER. And in that stifling air—oh!

MISS JANE. But it isn't stifling, Miss Carter. It was my brother's playhouse—and in some way or other my father arranged that there should always be a current of air. Don't worry about that.

MISS CARTER. But where can she be?

MISS JANE. Why, she must be *there*. (*To ELMA.*) Did you look carefully?

ELMA. We couldn't have missed her—it is such a little place. And, anyway, the door was latched just as we had left it.

IRENE (*who, with CLARE, ELSIE and OLIVE has been standing up R.*). Listen—everybody! Don't you hear a queer, queer sound?

MISS CARTER (*after a pause*). I don't hear anything.

IRENE. You're too far away, perhaps. (*MISS CARTER crosses to her.*) It's a sort of muffled pounding. *There!* (*And sure enough there is a sort of muffled pounding.*)

CLARE. Where can it be? There's nothing around here to pound.

IRENE. The summer house.

CLARE. But nobody could pound the summer house without being seen.

IRENE. Maybe it's Mandy's spirits. (*And again the muffled pounding.*)

MISS CARTER. I hear it now.

ETHEL. Oh, dear! I'm frightened—it all seems so very strange.

ELSIE (*crossing to L.*) It's getting darker, too. (*As she takes ETHEL's hand.*) You don't mind if I hold your hand, do you?

CHARLOTTE. Aren't we wasting time? I'm not so interested in the noise as in finding Beth.

MISS CARTER (*turning*). We *are* wasting time. Miss Jane, can we organize a search party right away? Charlotte, will you and Olive thoroughly examine the cave? And—

ETHEL. Please give us something to do.

ELMA. And us.

CLARE (*coldly*). You've done quite enough as it is.

IRENE. Thanks to *your* meddling, Beth is lost.

ELSIE. Please don't say lost—she can't be lost.

OLIVE. Cheer up, all of you. It isn't so bad as you think—and when you least expect her she'll suddenly appear, safe and sound.

*And, as if in direct answer to these words of cheer, the floor of the summer house slowly, weirdly and mysteriously rises, while into the aperture comes BETH's head and shoulders.*

MISS CARTER. Beth! Beth! (*Rushes to her.*)

BETH (*smiling calmly*). My—but I thought I'd never get that old trap door to move. Didn't you all hear me pounding?

*(And the Camp Fire girls, crowding around her, help her to her feet and follow her as she walks to the front of the stage, supported by MISS CARTER, with endless questions, such as, "What does it all mean?" "Where have you been?" "Were you hiding from us?" "How did you know there was a place under the summer house?" and "Tell us everything—everything." ELMA, HAZEL and NITA, a bit abashed, very much agitated, stand by the tree. BETH is very disheveled, her hair is awry; in one hand she carries the flash light and in the other a small black box.)*

BETH (*as she spies ELMA, HAZEL and NITA*). Come along, girls! I don't feel cross with you in spite of the joke you played upon me.

ELMA (*as they come down L.*). You knew who we were?

BETH. Not until you shoved me into the cave and took off my bandage. Then I caught a glimpse of Elma's ring—my ring, I should say—and I knew it was all to scare me.

ELMA. Oh, Beth, I'm so sorry—so very sorry—

HAZEL. And so am I—

NITA. And if I had known that all this would happen, I never, never would have done it.

BETH. Don't apologize, please. For if it hadn't been for you three people, I never could have had my big adventure.

MISS CARTER. Tell us about it, my dear—if you're not too tired.

BETH. *Tired!* I never felt better in my life.

MISS CARTER. But you're excited.

BETH. Of course I am. (*As she sees MISS JANE, who is standing by the chair.*) Here's something for you. (*And MISS JANE opens the box and stands looking at the contents in a dazed way.*) Tell me—what is it?

MISS JANE. My mother's wedding pearls.

BETH (*clapping her hands*). Then it's true—it's true. Oh, Miss Carter, Miss Carter, wouldn't *you* be excited, too, if you'd found the treasure—if you'd been all through the secret passage from its very beginning to its very end?

CLARE. Beth, you don't mean to say that you've really found it—*really*?

BETH. Oh, but I do. Let me tell you all about it—for I'll never again in all my life have anything so thrilling to relate.

(*And she sits at front of stage, MISS CARTER to her right, ETHEL and ELSIE to her left, CHARLOTTE and OLIVE to MISS CARTER'S right, CLARE and IRENE half kneeling back of her. MISS JANE, as if bewildered, drops into the rustic chair with the three trespassers from the hotel at her feet.*)

BETH. You know all about my kidnapping, don't you?

ELMA. Oh, Beth, the more I think about that, the more dreadful it seems.

BETH. But I'm grateful to you—*really* I am.

ETHEL (*impatiently*). Oh, go on with the story.

BETH. After the girls pushed me into the cave and locked the door, I was too frightened to move—yes, I was.

ELSIE. I don't wonder.

BETH. It was so dark—and quiet—and so full of funny little noises.

OLIVE. *Ugh!*

BETH. And I was afraid to use my flash light—for I didn't know *what* was in the place.

MISS CARTER. How did you happen to have your flash light?

BETH. Mandy had just given it to me when the girls kidnapped me. If I hadn't had it I never could have done

what I did. (*Reflectively.*) I'll never part with this old flash light—never.

CHARLOTTE. Oh, go on—go on!

BETH. Well, finally I screwed up my courage and peeked into every corner. (*Turns.*) Miss Carter, it was dreadfully hard for me to do it—why I can't tell you *how* hard. I really suffered.

MISS CARTER. Of course you did—but you were a brave girl through it all.

BETH. Do you know what made me brave?

MISS CARTER. The bravery was there all the time, my dear.

BETH. Oh, no it wasn't. But there, in the dark, all by myself, I began to realize just what I had to do with nobody to help me. And I knew that if I was to be true to Camp Fire teachings, I must stick it out and live up to my Indian name.

MISS CARTER. And you did.

BETH. I sat there for an hour by my watch—hoping that somebody would find me—or that the girls would come back.

ETHEL. I should have been frightened to death.

BETH. I wasn't—truly I wasn't. Doesn't it seem strange when I've always been such a coward?

ELSIE. It seems—wonderful.

BETH. And finally—when nobody came—I felt as if I *had* to find a way out. So I took my flash light and went all around the cave, step by step, wondering if there could possibly be a door or a passageway. (*Pauses.*) And then—

IRENE (*eagerly*). Yes?

BETH. Someway or other I tripped and fell with all my might against that piece of rock that juts out. I felt it give way—then there was a dreadful rush of cold air—and when I flashed my light I saw a big opening.

CLARE. What was it? And how did it get there?

BETH. The big piece of rock had been a sort of door—I could see where the mortar had held it—and it was probably just about to fall away when I gave it a jolt. (*Pauses.*)



And when I looked into the opening I saw that it led to a passage high enough for me to walk—

CHARLOTTE. What did you think?

BETH. That I had found the secret passage—and that I must also find the treasure. Then I forgot even to think of being afraid and walked right in.

MISS CARTER. And do you remember saying that, if you should chance upon the passage, you'd never have courage to stir a foot?

BETH (*laughing*). Of course I do. And there *were* rats—plenty of them—

OLIVE. Oh, *Beth!*

BETH. And it was damp and cold, and in lots of places the sand had fallen in little heaps so that I had to go very slowly.

ETHEL. It sounds like a fairy story.

BETH. There were no fairies in *this* passage. Maybe the earth elves and the gnomes had driven them away.

ELSIE. Ethel, you're interrupting the story. What did you do next, Beth?

BETH. Well, I went on and on until I came to a place where the passage widened into a little room. And *there* I saw the treasure—all done up in bags and boxes.

CLARE. What did you think when you saw it?

BETH. I first thought of Miss Jane, and then I thought that this had been my chance to meet my emergency as a true Camp Fire girl should. (*Pauses.*) And I'm very sure that—never again—shall I be a coward.

MISS JANE. Do you realize, my dear, just what you have done for me? (*Holds up box.*) This means a future instead of a struggle.

BETH. And it's made me so happy to be able to do just what I was wishing for only this afternoon. I wonder what gave me the opportunity. Was it luck—or chance—

MISS JANE. Or Providence? Providence, my dear.

IRENE. You haven't finished the story, Beth.

BETH. Where was I? Oh, yes—the little room with the treasure. Well, I stopped long enough to open one of the bags—and it *did* have silver—and to snatch up the little box

for Miss Jane. (*Mischievously*.) I thought, too, that it would prove to you that I wasn't making up my story.

CHARLOTTE. Oh, *do* go on.

BETH. Well, after that, I came to what seemed the end of the passage—with no sign of a door. And I had just about decided to go 'way back to the cave, when I saw something above me that looked like boards. So I went back and dragged in a box until I could shove it on a lot of sand. By climbing on the box I could reach the boards—

OLIVE. Which proved to be the summer house?

BETH. A trap door in the summer house. The hook was so rusty that I could hardly push it—and after I *did* get it through, the trap door stuck. So I pounded and pounded until it gave way—

ETHEL. Then you came out like a Jack-in-the-Box!

MISS JANE. More like a good fairy.

ELSIE (*laughing as she touches the grimy blouse*). In disguise.

MISS JANE. Unselfishness and endeavor for others can never be disguised.

BETH. And that's the end of my story. (*Pauses.*) And now that the excitement and the thrills are all over, I begin to feel very tired—and hungry.

MISS JANE (*rising*). In that case you shall be served with the very nicest dishes that cook can produce. (*Pauses.*) And again—I am very grateful to you, my dear. (*Goes off at L. 2 E.*)

MISS CARTER. And I'm very proud of you.

BETH. Then *that* makes me—oh, so happy. (*Rises.*) I'll tidy up a bit and get into my Indian dress.

ELMA (*rising*). Wait, Beth—just a minute before **you** go. (*Takes off the ring.*) Here's your ring. (*Holds it out.*)

BETH. You really want me to have it?

ELMA. You've won it.

BETH. But still—

ELMA. And I shall be truly proud to see you wear it.

BETH. Then I'll wear it. (*Slips it on her finger.*) And if I ever again feel the least bit afraid, the sight of it will brace me up and make me remember.

HAZEL. If the Camp Fire can do *that* for a person—it's very wonderful.

NITA. And it helps in so many other ways, doesn't it?

CLARE. It helps *us*—in every way.

ELMA. By making you brave—

HAZEL. And self-reliant.

NITA. And worth while.

ELMA (*after a moment's hesitation*). Miss Carter?

MISS CARTER. Yes?

ELMA. We've been thinking—and talking together—the three of us—and we have agreed that we should like to be Camp Fire girls, too.

ELSIE. Really?

ETHEL (*clapping her hands*). Oh, how splendid!

ELMA. So—will you take us in?

MISS CARTER. Will I take you in? My dear girls, it would give me the greatest happiness—but—

HAZEL. Oh, Miss Carter, does there have to be a *but* in it?

ELMA (*anxiously*). But—*what*?

MISS CARTER. We have work to do in the Camp Fire. It isn't all play.

NITA. That doesn't frighten us—for we think we need work.

MISS CARTER. And we aren't fashion plates.

HAZEL. That doesn't matter.

MISS CARTER. And our Camp Fire means so much to us that we are not willing to share it except with those who will love it for its own sake.

ELMA. That's what we wish to do—what we'll try to do.

MISS CARTER. Then I'll bid you welcome—we'll all bid you welcome—won't we, girls?

CLARE. More than welcome. (*And with expressions of delight the Camp Fire girls crowd around the three as they stand at L. 2 E.*)

HAZEL. Then it's all settled and we'll be over bright and early in the morning. (*As they move to gate.*) Good night, everybody. And have a good rest, Beth.

NITA. Don't dream of gypsies—

ELMA. Even if we did do our best to make a nightmare for you.

BETH. Just to prove that gypsies are a thing of the past, and that I don't intend to have a nightmare, I'll escort you to the gate and be the last one to tell you how glad we are to have you in the Camp Fire. (*The four walk slowly to the gate and stand there talking together.*)

MISS CARTER. Girls—there is something I want to say to you—and something I must say quickly. (*She stands in front of summer house. Instinctively CLARE, IRENE and OLIVE group themselves at her right, with ETHEL, ELSIE and CHARLOTTE at her left.*) Later on in the summer, after our splendid holiday of work and pleasure, I planned to bestow the four honors of which I spoke this afternoon. Something has happened since—something which has given us a real example of courage in spite of timidity; something which stands for true effort, true achievement.

CLARE. You mean Beth, of course.

MISS CARTER. I mean Beth. And this is what I ask you,—that now, when the significance of her effort is fresh in our minds, you permit me to grant the honor—Uta—to one who has truly won it.

CLARE. Oh, Miss Carter, we'd love it. (*And, in the meantime BETH has waved goodbye as the three girls go off at L., and has come slowly down L.*)

BETH (*as she sees the girls*). Oh, dear—have you begun? Can't you wait until I put on my Indian dress?

MISS CARTER. We'd rather have you just as you are, Beth. For, at the present moment, you represent true achievement; an achievement which has brought you a personal victory—which has given to another, help and encouragement. What has it meant to you, Beth?

BETH. Such a happiness, Miss Carter, since I have been able to find the treasure. I shall never forget it. And another happiness, too. For I have conquered the greatest enemy I ever had—the enemy, Fear. And that's worth a great deal, Miss Carter.

MISS CARTER. It is worth everything, Beth. For such a victory is gained only through effort—and effort means

perseverance and persistency and forgetfulness of self. Your effort has been doubly worthy—for it has been made not only in behalf of another, but in the face of obstacles. To every Camp Fire girl there is a certain honor greatly-to-be-desired, faithfully-to-be-sought, victoriously-to-be-won. Such an honor is called Uta—and it comes to the one who has experienced the struggle, the obstacles, the discouragement and the final triumph of *effort*. (*Pauses.*) Lexse—Clover—will you come forward? (*And as BETH walks slowly to her, the curtain falls.*)

CURTAIN.

# **The Call of Wohelo**

By LINDSEY BARBEE.

Price, 25 Cents

A comedy drama in 3 acts; 10 females. Time, 1¾ hours.  
**Scene:** 1 exterior. **Characters:** Ellen Ferris, Guardian of the Camp. Mrs. Vale, Camp mother. Blue Bird (Owaissa—Blue Bird), her young daughter. Wah-wah-taysee (Firefly), an Indian girl. Sylvia (Wayaka—See Beauty), a Camp "Misfit." Amy (Kee-wee—Rainbow Maid), a Torch Bearer. Marian (Disyadi—Moon Maid). A Fire Maker. Emily (Minnebaha—Laughing Water), a Wood Gatherer. Constance (Gaoh—Spirit of the Wind), a Wood Gatherer. Dorothy (To-he-ha—Humming Bird), a Wood Gatherer.

## **SYNOPSIS.**

Act I.—Blue Bird runs errands for the busy Camp Fire girls, among whom Sylvia alone is idle. Sylvia is declared a Camp "misfit," and Miss Ferris decides to make one last effort to interest her in Camp Fire life. A visitor, Miss Marshall, a noted Camp Fire worker, is promised and Amy tells a ghost story in which she herself is heroine. Wah-wah-taysee chants magic words and Sylvia promises to seek "the treasure."

Act II.—Under Wah-wah-taysee's tutelage, Sylvia becomes a very different girl, but the intimacy with the Indian girl brings criticism from her Camp Fire friends. The mention of Amy's ghost produces peals of laughter, for constant watching has failed to detect "The Lady in White." Miss Ferris announces that Miss Marshall will be present at the Council Fire. Amy persuades Marian and Sylvia to keep a last vigil for the ghost and they consent. Constance's money disappears and suspicion turns to the Indian. Wah-wah-taysee sends a message. The ghost proves something of a sensation.

Act III.—The Council Fire. Miss Marshall and the Indian are discovered to be the same. Wah-wah-taysee tells her story and Sylvia is admitted to the rank of Wood Gatherer.

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